

Dragons from Men

by actresspdx

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Summary: A modern twist on a beloved story. Hiccup lives on the pacific coast between the United states and Canada with the rest of the very Norse towns folk. In this, he deals with dragons, expectations, dangerous secrets, and his changing mind. Follows the basic movie plot, but with my own twists. T for a more mature story, not too violent for young readers. (Not Dragon!Hiccup) On Hiatus!

1. Chapter 1

****Hi, So this is my version of a HTTYD AU. It takes place in modern times, but not our world. I am keeping lots of the story the same, even most of the dialogue. But this story is how I imagine the story. Some things are very different. If anything it is like I took HTTYD and comic books and combined them. I will write from here on out in my own voice at the bottom, but I figured that I would put something here for the first chapter.****

* * *

><p>This, is Berk. It's twelve days north of hopeless, and a few degrees south of Freezing to death. It's located solidly on the pacific coast. My city, Berk. In a word; sturdy. And it's been here for three generations, but every single building is new. We have fishing, skiing, wide open forests, and a charming view of the sunsets.

The only problems are the pests. You see, most places have gamma irradiated monsters or aliens.

It was a dark night, the first day the world was changed. People in cars drove rapidly to get to their homes, wary of the night skies that hid the world. On every corner, by almost every door, stood watch full men and women, all armed to the teeth. The first night the

world changed, and it was peaceful for a while.

Until the sky was lit in fire. As people began to rush about, the ones who were armed trained their weapons to the sky. In all the destruction, the few people who held their wits shouted at the small but lanky figure that was me, as I blatantly headed the wrong way.

Most people would leave. Not us. We're Americans who migrated from a little island in the nation of Vikings. We have stubbornness issues.

My name's Hiccup. Great name, I know. It's a famliy name.

"Blast you, Hiccup! You're going the wrong way!" Shouted one stranger, as I slipped between the large figures, completely intent on getting to a nondescript building. A sudden hand grabbed my coat, and a voice yelled by my ear

"What is he doing... Hiccup, what are you doing here?" shouted the voice, "Get inside!"

That's Stoick the Vast. He ran the city, balancing the old county mindsets with American resolve. They say that when he was a baby he popped a Dragon's head clean off of its shoulders. Do I believe it? Yes I do.

I rushed in to the building that I had been heading for in the first place, dodging a short blast of fire from above.

As I headed in, I heard the reports on the dragons that were attacking.

"...a couple of Nadders, half a dozen gronkles, and Hork says he saw a nightmare over on fifth." proclaimed a warrior, as he reported to Stoick.

"Any Night furys?" Shouted Stoick, as he took a swing at a passing dragon.

"None so far."

"Yer late Hiccup." Said the man behind the counter, as he lowered the crossbow that he had had leveled at my head "I thought ye had been carried off" He grabbed his shiny metal hammer and attached it to his false hand.

The meathead with attitude and interchangeable hands is Gobber. I had been his apprentice ever since I was little. Well...littler.

"Come on, Gobber. Those dragons wouldn't know what to do with all this." I flexed my thin arms, then nearly fell under the weight of the amo clips tossed at me by Gobber.

"Well, they need toothpicks." Gobber lifted the blast door covering the shop, and started grabbing the empty cartridges handed to him, trading them for fresh ammo. As he turned back, a large cloud of fire burst forth from the building across the street.

See. Some old house, far more new houses.

As I recollected my hearing, I saw the other teens rush towards the fire with a hose and buckets.

First went Steve, but everyone called him Snotlout. Then there was the twins, Rachel "Roughnut" and Ted "Toughnut". Fishlegs, his actual name no less, followed far behind them. But the best and most important...

"Astrid!" Shouted Stoick "We need you all down on fifth. Reports of a Nightmare are coming in!"

I leaned out of the window to get a better look at her as she was leaving.

"Oy! Get back in here!" Gobber's hook latched onto my jacket, and dragged me back into the shop.

"Oh come on Gobber! Let me out. I need to make my mark." I cried.

"Ye've made plenty of marks, all in the wrong places." snorted Gobber

"Please, two minutes. I'll kill a dragon. My life will get infinitely better. I might even get a date!"

Gobber glared "You can't swing a axe, you can't hold a dragon rifle... You can't even throw a grenaid properly!" He tossed a grenaid to a waiting fighter, who yanked the pin out and threw it at a passing dragon.

"Ah, but this will throw it for me!" I said with pride, as I patted the dangerous grenaid launcher, which naturally chose that moment to launch the test grenaid I had rigged up. It flew through the air and slammed into the unsuspecting warrior at the door. He picked it up, screamed, and threw it at a passing dragon.

"See! This is what I am talking about!" bellowed Gobber.

"Mild calibration issue." I yelped, as I hooked the loose wire back into place.

"Hiccup. If ye ever wan to get out there to fight dragons, ye need t stop all... this." grumbled Gobber, as he started grabbing various weapons off the shelves.

Confused, I said "But... you just pointed to all of me."

"Yes! That's it! Stop being all of you" he said cheerfully, as he started lumping all of the dulled blades for chopping wings and tails.

I admit, it took a second for his meaning to dawn on me. "You, sir, are playing a dangerous game. Keeping this much, raw... potential dragon fighter power contained. There will be consequences!"

Gobber was unimpressed "I'll take my chances. Swords. Sharpen. Now.

I knew that one day, I'd get out there. Because killing a dragon was everything around here. A Nadder head was sure to get me at least noticed. Gronckles are tough. Taking down one of those would've definitely gotten me a girlfriend. A Zippelback? Exotic. Two heads, twice the status.

Outside, I heard one person run up to Stoick.

"They found the bloody sheep!" He shouted.

Stoick cursed, then ordered "Concentrate fire over the farms!"

"It's the Nightmare!" Shouted a woman, as she ripped through a barricade in her car.

And then there's the Monstrous Nightmare. Only the best Vikings went after those. They have this nasty habit of setting themselves on fire.

Stoick glared at the dragon, then turned to the catapult operator.
"Reload! I'll take care of this."

But the ultimate prize is the dragon no one had ever seen. We call it the...

A massive blast shook the whole building, as the catapult nearest to the shop was blasted to pieces.

"Damn it, it's a NIGHTFURY!"

This thing never took food, never showed itself, and...never misses. No one had ever killed a Night Fury. That's why I was going to be the first.

I edited this a bit, improving it.

2. Chapter 2

Gobber grabbed his sharp bladed prosthetic, then called out "Man the fort, Hiccup, they need me out there!" He started out the door, then stopped and turned back to me. "Stay. Put. There. You know what I mean." He bellowed at the dragons outside, and ran into the fray.

I sat for a minute, waiting for him to come back. But as soon as I knew that he was distracted, I grabbed my laser guided grenade launcher, and ran out the door.

The fight outside was cooling down, with all the Nadders already captured, and the gronckles being driven off. As I snuck past my father, I heard him shout "Mind yourselves! The devils still have some juice in them!" as he plugged the fire holes of a particularly pissed Nadder.

I ran past streets full of dragons, but I did not see the Nightmare that everyone had been crazed about. My goal had been the hill in the center of the port, as it held some of the largest cannons in the whole town. The way I had seen it, they probably were the biggest targets. I thumbed the safety.

"Come on. Give me something to shoot at, give me something to shoot at." I muttered. My prayers where answered in the shrill shriek of the Nightfury. The rapid strike to the cannon in front of me came soon after. The laser on the launcher targeted the fast moving shape, and I hit the trigger.

Falling back thanks to the recoil, I threw myself back to my feet just in time to see the falling form of the dragon.

"Oh I hit it! Yes, I hit it! Did anybody see that?" I shouted, as I whipped around to look for witnesses, only to see that everyone was distracted in the main section of the battle. Well, almost everyone. I froze as a burst of heat created up behind me, to the fearless growling sound that I immediately recognized as a Nightmare.

I slowly turned around, and was treated by the sight of a fully burning, fully grown, and more importantly very angry nightmare. "Except for you." I said on reflex. Then I turned back around and ran, screaming at the top of my lungs.

As I ran past Stoick, he tracked my motion, then turned to realize that the angry Nightmare had burned through the ropes holding the Nadders down.

"DO NOT let them escape!" He shouted, then was drowned out by the sound of the Nightmare flaming at the search light that I had hid behind.

Quietly, I crept out for behind the melting light, coming face to face with the dragon. But Stoick came in, and slammed his fist into the jaw of the dragon. The dragon swirled around, and tried to burn him. He coughed, sputtered, and then whimpered as soon as he realized what the lack of fire ment.

Stoick grinned, then said "You're all out of juice" Stoick lunged, but was distracted by the flight of the captured Nadders as they escaped.

There is one thing that I forgot to mention...

The burnt and ruined light shifted and fell, revealing a slightly charred me. I looked at the red faces surrounding me, then turned to Stoick.

"Sorry, dad." I said. The clearly unamused man in front of me silently asked for an explanation. "Okay, but I hit a Night Fury." I said.

Admittedly, it probably was the wrong thing to say. He slammed a large hand to his head, then reached over and grabbed my collar.

"It's not like the last few times, Dad. I mean I really actually hit it. You guys were busy and I had a very clear shot. It went down, just off Raven Point. Let's get a search party out there, before it-" I attempted to say, before Stoick, my father, cut me off.

"-STOP! Just...stop. Every time you step outside, disaster follows. Can you not see that I have bigger problems? Winter's almost here and

I have entire platoons of soldiers and the rest of the city to feed!"

Unable to help myself, I had to say "Between you and me, the city could do with a little less feeding, don't ya think?" The surrounding adults made displeased sounds, but many of them promptly sucked in their guts that did hang out from behind their belts.

The light that had been my hiding spot suddenly lurched down the hill, crashed into a fountain, and blew up.

Stoick turned red in the face and snarled "This isn't a joke, Hiccup! Why can't you follow the simplest orders?"

"I can't stop myself. I see a dragon and I have to just... kill it, you know? It's who I am, Dad."

Father sighed, put both hands to his temples, then proceeded to drag me back to Gobber. "You are many things, Hiccup. But a dragon killer is not one of them." He then passed me off to Gobber. "Get back to the house. Make sure he gets there. I have his mess to clean up."

As Gobber followed me up the street, we walked past the other teens. Tuffnut called cheerfully after me.

"Quite the performance."

Snotlout added "I've never seen anyone mess up that badly. That helped!"

I could not stop myself from replying "Thank you, thank you. I was trying!"

Walking through the destruction that I had helped create, I knew that I had defend my actions "I really did hit one."

"Sure, Hiccup."

I, naturally, was already starting to gain speed in my argument "He never listens."

Gobber seemed to find that amusing. "Well, it runs in the family."

I ignored him, still in my own world. "And when he does, it's always with this... disappointed scowl. Like someone skimped on the meat in his sandwich." I put on my fathers thick ascent that was shared by all the adults.

"Excuse me, waitress. I'm afraid you brought me the wrong offspring. I ordered an extra large boy with beefy arms and extra guts and glory on the side. This here, this is a talking fish bone."

Gobber cheerily replied "You're thinking about this all wrong. It's not so much what you look like. It's what's inside that he can't stand."

It was my turn to glare at him. "Thank you, for summing that up."

Noticing his mistake, he said "No, Look, the point is...stop trying

so hard to be something you're not."

"I just want to be one of you guys." With that, I headed inside.

I looked around the main hall of our house, with its tall ceilings and old furniture. I had not yet felt the exhaustion that would soon set in from staying up all night. I knew that I had hit the dragon, and it was just a matter of finding it to prove myself. So I ran upstairs and grabbed my jacket, knife, and note book. I took one last look around the house, and rushed out the door.

* * *

><p>"Ugh, the gods hate me." I complained, as I walked through the undergrowth "Some people lose their knife or their mug. No, not me. I manage to lose an entire Dragon?!"<p>

I was feeling hopeless, as the map I brought was filled with black marks in all the places that I checked. Right when I was about to turn back, I ran into something. I had been so intent of the map that I had not noticed the broken tree right in front of me.

"What the..." I looked at the tree, which was snapped at an odd angle. Looking around, I noticed a path of broken trees. I crept closer to the end of the wrecked tree trail, and just as I was rounding a large rock, I saw a large, black form.

"Oh wow." I whispered "I did it. I did it. This fixes everything." I crept out of hiding, and moved to the large black dragon.

"Yes! I have brought down this mighty beast!" I shouted, as I planted my foot on its back. That was when it moved. I gave a large shout and ran back for the cover of the rock.

I grabbed my knife in one hand, and slowly approached the creature. It was tangled in the ropes that we had strung along the tree line, I could see no major damage caused by the grenade that I had launched.

I stood by its throat, and noticed its electric green eyes, staring right at me.

"I'm going to kill you, Dragon. I'm gonna cut out your heart and take it to my father. I'm a warrior." I said, then I shouted to the world "I am a Warrior!"

I raised my blade above my head, then looked at it one last time.

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So, What do You think? I took most if not the dialogue from the movie. This was really fun to write, and I will be continuing for the rest of the movie, then the TV series, then the next movie, unless I end up giving up.

**But now I have to issue a warning. After this chapter, I start taking my own spin on things. The nature of dragons change, the Landscape is definitely different, and some major character changes

take place. If you like the way things are progressing right now, I might consider making another story following the plot of the main story line. It depends on who notices this story, and what every one thinks.**

Flame on, my readers.

3. Chapter 3

The beast looked at me, but what I saw was not the mindless rage that I associated to a captured animal. It was intelligent fear. Fear that my face reflected in its eyes. But also in its eyes, was pain.

Then sealed its eyes shut, it's head landing on the ground.

I then made a decision that changed the course of my life.

I cut the ropes. They snapped, one by one, and the dragon grew tense. I thought that it was too injured to attack me, that I would have enough time to run. But as the last rope snapped, the dragon lunged at me.

In that moment, the only thought in my mind was panic. _Get away_ my body screamed. The dragon had me pressed against the rock that had previously hid me from its view. It's claws dug into my shoulder, it's teeth and eyes the main things that held my attention. Then it bent his head down, and gripped my arm in his mouth. It bit down, and I lost my grip on the world.

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It was quite a few hours later that I woke up. The sun that had only just been rising when I first left the house was all the way up and, since it was only fall, I knew that I had been out for half a day. My arm was throbbing, I had a kink in my neck from sleeping on the rock, and my eyes twinged in the strangely sharp light.

I looked down at my arm, expecting to see a distinct lack of arm. What I saw was... an arm. A perfectly normal arm, aside from the pale half moon line of teeth marks lining up around my elbow on both sides.

I became aware of a odd chirping sound coming from my discarded jacket.

"Oh, for the love of Thor!" I moaned, the previous events pushed to the back of my mind as I grabbed the phone and saw the five to get home alarm that I had set as a precaution.

I ran like I was being chased by a Nightmare, knowing full and well that it would be better than facing my likely to be very angry father.

In that time between my house and where I woke up, I thought about what I would say to him. I had just came face to face with the most feared and dangerous of all the dragons known to our people. I could have ended its existence, and become the greatest of all the dragon

fighters on the island. Instead, I cut the ropes that held it down, and let it attack me, then fainted away like a drunken old lady at the winter festival.

I came to the realization that my situation could get very bleak, very quickly.

Rushing to the back door, I paused to put my jacket on to cover up the torn sleeve of my arm. I snuck into the dark house, hoping against hope that my father was still out at work.

"Hiccup."

I jumped like a cat whose tail was stepped on. "Dad. Uh... I have to talk to you, Dad."

Instead of frowning and chewing me out, Stoick sighed "I need to speak with you too, son. You go first."

I decided to get all the information first. "No, you go first."

Stoick smiled, and said with a sad smile "Alright. You get your wish. Dragon training. You start in the morning."

I realized that I should have gone first. "Uh, 'cause I was thinking, you know we have a surplus of Dragon-fighting townsfolk, but do we have enough bread-making people, or small home repair-

He hadn't been really listening "You'll need this." He said as he handed me a double headed ax with reinforced blades.

"I don't want to fight Dragons." I blurted out as the weight of the unwelcome weapon took my arms pain threshold to a new frontier.

He laughed and said "Come on. Yes, you do."

"Rephrase. Dad, I can't kill Dragons." I protested, setting the dark weapon, which was setting my nerves off.

"But you will kill Dragons." He assured me, looking for the cleaning cloth and sharpening stones.

"No, I'm really very extra sure that I won't." I insisted, edging as far as I could from the curved blades.

Stoicks, turned to me, and I halted in my tracks "It's time Hiccup. You're growing up."

I tried again. "Can you not hear me?!"

"This is serious son!" He declared, grabbing the cold weapon and thrusting it into my hands. "When you carry this axe, you carry all of us with you. Which means you walk like us. You talk like us. You think like us. No more of... this."

I frowned, the axe in my arms forgotten as I said in indignation "You just gestured to all of me."

"Deal?" He said, his chiefly eyebrow raised

I snarled "This conversation is feeling very one-sided."

"DEAL?!" He said, looming over me.

I sighed and said "Deal."

Stoick smiled in what could have been pride. "Good. Train hard. I'll be back. Probably."

When he closed the door to his room to pack, so he could travail off to who knows where, I whispered with gloom "And I'll be here... Maybe" letting the head of the axe rest on the ground.

- a -

So, took me forever to write this. Family drama, school drama, some painful news, and life as a student forced me to put this on the back burner. **It is a bit shorter than I would like it to be, but it was the spot that it needed to stop. And wow, I have six followers. I don't know if I should be happy for myself or worried for their sanity for liking my writing.**

Edited 1/23/2015

4. Chapter 4

In the morning, I woke up to the sounds of an empty house. I had gone to sleep in my jacket, just in case my father decided to check up on me.

Slowly running through my morning routine, I looked at the new scar on my arm. It was delicate, the tooth marks little silver curves on my arm. I was so absorbed in the appearance of my arm, that I shoved the other hand into boiling hot water.

With a loud shout, I grabbed at the pained flesh of my hand. It was not serious, the pain fading away as soon as it started. I glared at the scars, blaming them for the pain.

"This is just great" I said, hands grabbing at my hair. I knew that the events that occurred would distract me from anything that I would be learning.

With a sigh, I grabbed my brown jacket from the laundry, fit my boots over my feet, and moved to get the axe that my father force-gifted me. It was less uncomfortable to hold at this point, since my arm was finished healing, as far as I could tell. But I still felt uneasy holding the weapon.

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"Welcome to Dragon training!" bellowed Gobber over the tall crowd of people. He gestured for the aids to start sorting the groups in between their classes. I tailed after my group, who got the largest training room, being the most advanced group.

The complex of class rooms consisted of several levels of classes. My group had been made up of teenagers. The elementary school, middle school, and high school where all contained in the same building, because it was the best maintained and defended of all the buildings. Most of it was under ground. Even our government was there.

My class was extra small, because the other teens either chose to simply stay in regular school, or went straight to training. The kids in my class all paid for advanced training, tested into the advanced program, or were legacies. Altogether, there were only six of us.

"No turning back." I over heard Astrid say, as she gracefully flipped her axe to one shoulder and patted at her sidearm holster at her hip.

"I hope I get some serious burns." said Toughnut, holding tightly to a practice rifle, that fired darts instead of bullets

His sister crowed in agreement "I'm hoping for some mauling, like on my shoulder or lower back."

Astrid laughed, nudging Roughnut's arm "Yeah, it's only fun if you get a scar out of it."

I was still grim from my fate, and my arm had begun to throb as soon as I saw the stadium of a class room we got to practice in.

"Yeah, no kidding, right? Pain. Love it." I said in my most sarcastic tone.

Toughnut turned around, the other kids slumping when they heard my voice. "Oh great. Who let him in?"

Gobber overheard our conversation.

"Let's get started!" he declared, moving around to the side of the stadium. "The recruit who does best will win the honor of killing his first Dragon in front of the entire town"

Snotlout snidely stated "Hiccup already killed a Night Fury, so does that disqualify him or...?"

"Can I transfer to the class with the cool Vikings?" said a clueless Toughnut.

I was feeling more than a little discouraged. Stuck in a class that I did not even want to be in, full of kids who didn't want me, it was hard not to wish for something else.

"Don't worry." said a kind Gobber. He bent down, to say in my ear "You're small and you're weak. That'll make you less of a target. They'll see you as sick or insane and go after the more Viking-like teens instead."

He wasn't helpful in the least.

Gobber walked up to the large, steel gates on the periphery of the Colosseum.

"Behind these doors are just a few of the many species you will learn to fight. Dragons like... The Deadly Nadder.

Fishlegs spouted "Speed: eight; Armor: sixteen."

Gobber patted another door, which jolted violently "The Hideous Zippleback."

"Plus eleven stealth times two." said Fishlegs

"The Monstrous Nightmare." Gobber said, gesturing to a slowly glowing door

"Firepower: fifteen." squeaked out an over excited Fishlegs, as the other teens scooted away slowly.

Gobber glared at the others as he pointed to the largest door "The Terrible Terror..."

Fishlegs shouted "Attack: eight; Venom: twelve."

"CAN YOU STOP THAT?!" bellowed a angry Gobber

He then sighed "And... the Gronckle."

Fishlegs tilted in my direction "Jaw strength: eight." he murmured.

I was growing more aware of the fact Fishlegs had his social climbing priorities turned off, but while I was distracted, Gobber had made it to the large lever besides the Gronckle cage. I was snapped out of my thoughts when Snotlout screamed.

"Whoa, wait! Aren't you gonna teach us first!?"

Gobber smiled the same smile I had see so many times in the shop.

"I believe in learning on the job."

And he opened the gate.

* * *

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So, this one is short, but I am posting another one tomorrow or tonight. I was going to post this on the 22, in honer of my BD, but then I got distracted by a project that I forgot to do. Oh well.

And I also have my story in a community:

Modern AU Hiccupstrid Fanfics

Edited 1/23/2015

5. Chapter 5

"Today is about survival." Gobber narrated from behind the blast

shield "If you get blasted, you're dead. Quick, what's the first thing you're going to need?"

I was staring at the whirring wings of a mud brown Grockle, who was clearly hungry, clearly angry, and was very panicked at being confronted by five teens and a talking fish bone.

"A doctor?" I suggested.

"Plus five speed?" Fishlegs howled, running towards the other side of the arena.

Astrid snapped "A shield."

She took a running leap at the small pile of riot shields that had clearly been painted by the kindergarteners two floor down.

Gobber noticed that she was the only one heading for the shields.

"Shields! Go!" he yelled "Your most important piece of equipment is your shield. If you must make a choice between a sword or a shield, take the shield."

I rushed in to the shields, grabbing one at random. It had odd swirls all over the front. Toughnut and his sister both grabbed for the same shield.

"Get your hands off my shield!" screeched at his sister.

"There's like a million shields!" Roughnut bellowed right back at him

Toughnut gestured at a shield that every one left behind.

"Take that one, it has a flower on it. Girls like flowers."

Roughnut grabbed the shield, only to smash her brother over the head with it.

"Oh, now this one has blood on it." she said, sneering down the shield at her brother.

The Gronckle flew around the room, searching for a easy target. It saw the twins standing in the middle of the arena, and fired one blast at them. It hit the shield, at a far lower power thanks to the lack of proper food.

"Toughnut, Roughnut, yer out!" bellowed Gobber, turning around to the other students.

"What?" Shouted the twins. They grabbed their heads like their ears were ringing.

Gobber watched us as we wove around, calling out hints while we passed.

"Those shields are good for another thing: noise! Make lots of it to throw off a dragon's aim."

We hit our shields, and the dragons flight was destabilized. It flew around in curves, as if it no longer could decide who to hit.

"All dragons have a limited number of shots. How many does a Gronckle have?" Gobber said, as he lazily tossed a rock at the dragon to catch its attention and make it notice the other students.

"Five?!" Snotlout cried out, before seeing his mistake in making himself a target.

Fishlegs laughed at Snotlout. The dragon turned to the loud sound, taking notice of Fishlegs.

"No, six!"

Gobber sneered at Fishlegs, looking at the dragon charging at Fishlegs.

"Correct, six. That's one for each of you!"

The other students had seen the dragon, and had cleared out from Fishlegs, who was still gloating from his correct answer.

Gobber looked at the others, while Fishlegs was slammed into by the dragons blast.

"Fishlegs, out."

I decided that my time would be better spent hiding in the shadows, behind the crates of synthetic food given to the dragons to keep them alive. Naturally, Gobber noticed me.

"Hiccup, get in there!" He cried, tossing another rock at my spot. I crept out of hiding, only to have to dodge a blast. I darted back into hiding, waiting for the dragon to be distracted by the others.

Snotlout was fairly distracted by Astrid, who was clearly not interested in his flaunting.

"...So anyway I'm moving into my parents' basement. You should come by sometime to work out. You look like you work out." He carried on, as she rolled into a somersault dive that she landed slightly crooked, ending up by me.

Gobber shouted at Snotlout, telling him off for being distracted.

I was then in a similar position that he had just vacated.

"So, I guess it's just you and me, huh?" I said, trying to lift my axe in an attempt to look bigger. It felt lighter than it had the night before.

"Nope. Just you." She replied, darting away just as a fireball crashed to where she had been standing.

Gobber gleefully announced his count on the fireballs.

"One shot left!"

I had become the center of the dragons attention. It cornered me by the stacks that I had hid in before.

Well, this is the second time this has happened to me in as many days... I thought, tensing up against the wall as the dragon. Looking at the dragon, I again noticed the fear. But unlike the Night Fury it was a uncontrolled fear, violently surging to the surface. It was like that of a child, who was hurt and angry.

I tried to be as small as I could. Over the dragons robust growls, I could hear Gobber shouting my name. The dragon charged its final blast, and I covered my eyes with my sore arm. The dragons charge stopped building, and I glanced up. It's eyes were locked onto my arm, and I saw what looked like surprise.

Then Gobber's hooked prosthetic reached into the dragons mouth, and jerked its head to aim a foot above my head. The dragon made an odd sound, and the fire ball that had been dwindling shot out even faster than I had expected.

"And that's six!" Gobber said as he started dragging it to the cage. "Go back to bed, ya overgrown sausage!"

Gobber turned to us, taking in the sight of half a dozen bruised prides.

"You'll get another chance, don't you worry. The most important lesson today is to remember, a Dragon will always..." He paused, glaring at me "will always go for the kill."

The other fighters rolled their shoulders, grabbed their weapons, and started out of the ring. But I lifted my hand and set it on the burn pattern on the wall.

"So why didn't you?" I murmured to myself.

- a -

****Updated for clarity****

****Edited 1/23/2015****

6. Chapter 6

A few hours later I found myself out in the woods. I had started off by where I had last seen the dragon, and eventually ended back up there.

Bending down, I lifted the hardy ropes from the ground and twisted it into a good bundle, grimacing as the healing skin pulled around the edges of the scars.

"Well this was stupid." I sighed, listening for the sounds of a dragon.

It was then something on the ground caught my eye. It looked like a round, black rock that glimmered in the dying light. I lifted it up and realized that it was a obsidian colored scale.

It was the first breakthrough that I had that day. I now knew what to look for. All that time, I had been looking at the sky, when I should have been looking for the trail it left on the ground. I rushed along the small trail, loosing it at times. But eventually, it led me to a cove.

It was a deep hole in the ground. They were found all over the hills, but this had been one of the most beautiful that I had ever seen. It contained a crystal pool of water that came off the mountains, full of fish that swam in lazy circles. There were trees and low plants, with a cave embedded in the side of the cove's walls, that stretched up taller than many two story houses found in Berk. A crack in the side made a path that ran through the wall, small enough for a person.

A black shape darted across my field of vision, passing within five feet of the overhang that I perched on.

"_That dragon..." _I whispered under my breath, reaching under my jacket for one of my many sketchbooks from my engineering class.

I hurriedly began sketching out the dragon, trying to get as much detail as possible before it noticed me. It slumped over to the pool, tracking the fish until one got close enough to him to attack. He tried to nail one with his jaws, but missed repeatedly and gave up in a huff.

Two main wings, two smaller wings, and tail fin...

"Why don't you just... fly away?" I wondered, as the dragon attempted again. It fell to the earth with a loud thump, and began flaming at the ground, its wings raising aggressively.

When he began thumping his tail against the ground, I noticed that I had drawn too many tail fins. I sat my pencil on the rock under me, and began rubbing out the mistake I had made.

Wouldn't you be too unbalanced to make all of those sharp turns? I wondered, reaching for the pencil again to continue sketching the beast

A sudden loud sound came out of the cove when he blew an extra large fireball, giving a sound that ground on my ears like a whetstone on a chipped blade. I flinched, startled by the sound that stopped as soon as it started. But that flinch was enough to send my pencil flying out into the air.

I watched the pencil fall in slow motion, hearing every clack it made on its path to freedom.

The dragon fixed his head on the fallen pencil, blinking in confusion. It then straightened up and looked at me.

It displayed no aggression, likely because it had no time. Or because I was so small.

I met its large eyes, tilting my head to keep my balance. The dragon met my movement, clearly just as curious as I was of it. Then it blinked at me, looked away and moved off to the shelter of the trees.

I let out a light puff of breath that I had been holding, got to my feet and started the trek home.

* * *

><p>- a -<p>

It took me nearly an hour to get out of the thick woods, and about half way through it started to rain. I came up to the cafeteria that served as the towns general meeting area.

It was a large main room, one that truly resembled a hunt lodge. It was partially filled with dead dragon heads, and other gruesome trophies. The hall was mostly empty, with all the able bodied adults off on the water, and the lower classed teens choosing to go to the nightclub or stay home to study. But the advanced class was gathered around a table eating food, listening to Gobber as he criticized what he had seen in the arena.

My food was slightly cold, leaving much to be appreciated. I walked over towards the others, knowing that Snotlout would block my seat. I sat at the table next to them, and picked at my food, listening to Gobbers cometary.

"Alright. Where did Astrid go wrong in the ring today?" he said,, then took a deep chug of his drink.

Before any of the others could say anything, Astrid piped up.

"I mistimed my somersault dive. It was sloppy. It threw off my reverse tumble." she said. I had to agree, if only because I had gotten a very impressive view when she went down.

Roughnut sneered at her, knocking her shoulder.

"Yeah. We noticed."

Snotlout rushed in to try to complement her mistake.

"No, no, you were great. That was so 'Astrid'." he said, while we all rolled our eyes at his sucking up.

Gobber set his cup down and bounced his prosthetic lightly on his head.

"She's right, you all have to be tough on your-selves." he said, then rounded on me. He leaned against the table, and all the others stared towards my soaked form.

"Where did Hiccup go wrong?" Gobber asked, gesturing to me.

Roughnut spoke her mind.

"Uh. He showed up."

Toughnut added his own opinion

"He didn't get eaten."

It was looking like that was going to be the final comment, as Gobber turned to berate the others.

"He's never where he should be."

Astrid suddenly appeared by Gobber's shoulder, glaring my way. Her sudden appearance had my lips baring my teeth slightly, but I forced my face back into neutrality.

Gobber sighed in relief at Astrid, clearly pleased that she was paying attention.

"Thank you, Astrid." He decided, then patted me on my shoulder "You need to live and breathe this stuff."

Gobber slammed a book down on the other table.

"The Dragon Manual. Everything we know about every Dragon we know of, what is available to the public, any way."

I heard the sound of a far off all clear signal. Another one went off by the cafe, and the others visibly relaxed.

"No attacks tonight. Study up." Gobber said, then casually walked out of the large doors.

Toughnut and his sister were not happy about this.

"Wait, you mean read?" he said.

"While we're still alive?" whimpered his sister

Snotlout bullishly raised his head, and struck a pose.

"Why read words when you can just kill the stuff the words tell you stuff about?"

Fishlegs puffed his chest up, excited about such a interesting subject.

"Oh! I've read it like, seven times. There's this water Dragon that sprays boiling water at your face. And there's this other one that buries itself for like a week..."

Toughnut had been gesturing for Fishlegs to shut up, eventually snapping his fingers in front of his face.

"Yeah, that sounds great. There was a chance I was going to read that..."

"... but, now..." Roughnut finished his thought.

"You guys read, I'll go kill stuff." said Snotlout, pushing off from his chair.

Fishlegs continued on his little rant, heedless of the others annoyance.

The last two of us were left standing by the book.

"So I guess we'll share-"

Astrid turned around and started off to the doors.

"Read it." she called over her shoulder.

"All mine then." I said, taking a step towards her direction, calling out "Wow, so okay. I'll see you uh..."

The door slammed shut behind her.

"...tomorrow." I finished off lamely.

* * *

><p>- a -<p>

It was a long, cold walk home. The book weighed on my arm, but I could barely feel it. All I could think of was the obvious dislike that the other students felt towards me.

Snotlout, I could understand. He was my mother's nephew, but his family had never been on great standing with the Haddocks. They had what could be called a mild rivalry, dating back to both our great-grandfathers. Since I was the son of the man in charge of the city, I would be the one to take over the private army and the other businesses in the area.

The twins never particularly hated me. They did enjoy when I messed up, the more fire the better. But they also got in the program thanks to the legacy clause, and therefore had to fight and kick their way up the ladder to qualify in their chosen areas. I was literally dropped into the class by my father, with no fight to get in at all.

Fishlegs did not really hate me, or particularly dislike me at all. In fact, If I had just a slightly better reputation, I believed that I would have been higher on the totem pole.

But Astrid, she was a mystery. I could not for the life of me, figure out what I had done to earn her disdain. She was not actively hateful, but she was in no way pleasant.

_She is probably just offended by my size. _ I thought, as I pulled open the door to my empty house.

* * *

><p>- a -<p>

So, Sorry for the late date. I just know that Your all glaring at me through your **screens, but I do have good excuses. I got fairly sick, thanks to over stressing myself over grades. But now we are almost done with the year, and I decided to up lode this for the readers I have.**

Don't be afraid to ask questions, or give suggestions. Just remember, Don't do anything that you would want done to your self.

****Love you all, and I hope you enjoyed this chapter.****

****Only 6 more days 'till the next movie!****

****Edited 1/23/2015****

7. Chapter 7

I flicked the light switches on in the hall, moving through the passageway lined with pictures.

My house was cold, the great fire faded down to coals. Our heating units slowly chugged to life, sensing my presence in the house. The room was a large hall like thing, with skins stretched over the banisters.

Walking up the stairs was a task, as new bruises and scrapes accumulated over the day made themselves known. I snagged a Tylenol 1, for once thankful for being so close to the Canadian-North American border.

I tapped the light switch in my room, and it snapped on to illuminate my messy room. One wall was completely dedicated to sketches of weapons, dragons, and posters. My room had a thin layer of crumpled paper on the ground, the result of the problem with my grenade launcher.

With a sigh, I flopped on my bed, and stretched my hands over the side. The sounds of the empty house filled my ears, creaks and slow moans of age.

Lets get this over with, I thought as I opened to the beginning of the book, taking my paper pad out for notes.

"Dragon classifications. Strike Class, Fear Class, Mystery Class." I muttered, writing out everything carefully.

Thunderdrum: This reclusive Dragon inhabits sea caves and dark tide pools. When startled, the Thunderdrum produces a concussive sound that can kill a man at close range. Extremely dangerous. Kill on sight.

"Seems simple enough. But I bet you have to be six feet tall and look like a bear to kill it." As I looked at the next page, my suspicions were confirmed by a crude dragon killing a short man as another man prepared to kill it.

I turned the page.

Timberjack: This gigantic creature has razor sharp wings that can slice through full grown trees. Extremely dangerous. Kill on sight.

I stopped reading, surprised by the ongoing simplicity and lack of information that was given.

It's the twenty first century, so why does this sound like the middle ages?

I flipped past the Scauldron, Changewing, and numerous other dragons. Some burn their victims, bury their victims, choke their victims, or turn their victims inside-out. But every dragon had the words 'Extremely dangerous kill on sight' in their descriptions.

Until I hit the last entry on dragons.

Night Fury. Speed unknown. Size unknown. The unholy offspring of lightning and death itself.

I thought back to the dragon in the cove, with its dark hide and electric eyes. I could understand why my ancestors believed in its 'unholy' nature, but I knew that those words did not belong in a scientific book.

I continued reading, hoping that there would be something to make up for the nature of the description.

Never engage this Dragon. Your only chance, hide and pray it does not find you.

"What! That can't be it!?" I complained, turning the page in search of more information. It only gave a list of theorized dragons, recommended weapons for the various classifications, and famous kills.

In the very back, however, a picture of the author and his tactics had a slim chapter to itself.

He was the usual sort of burly man who I had come to expect in a dragon fighter, with one key difference.

He was short. His wife towered over him by a good two feet, this making him too small to properly handle most of the weapons of his time.

Bork the Bold, previously Bork the very VERY unfortunate, was a man stuck by a mysterious curse. For an unknown reason, he was plagued by numerous dragon attacks throughout his life. After several years of losing his jobs to the lizards, he began making a record of his findings to keep from making the same mistakes. After realizing others have made the same mistakes and never told anyone how to do better, he published them. Unfortunately, after many years worth of attacks his stressed mind snapped; and he was institutionalized. Not too long after, people began to appreciate his effort in helping the normal man protect themselves from dragons. His personal work is held by his family, who feel that much of his work is intensely influenced by his descent into paranoia.

This descent was the reason for the Bork laws, that prevent further study outside standard observation, as the beasts were classified as too dangerous to come close to without death.

* * *

><p>- a -<p>

"You know, I just happened to notice the book had nothing on Night Furies. Is there another book? Or a sequel? Maybe a little Night Fury pamphlet?"

It was the next day, and it was already dismal. I woke up late, had to skip breakfast, find a new weapon to replace my destroyed axe, and get to a class I did not want to take. In the end, I went with a training rifle like the twins.

The class that day was a maze of quickly built walls, just tall enough that Gobber could walk with out his helmet sticking out above them. He released the Nadder he had boasted about just as suddenly as he had the previous day.

"Focus Hiccup! Yer not even trying!" Gobber shouted, his voice exasperated as I dodged behind a corner to avoid the Nadder.

"Today is all about attack!" he said, amplifying his voice to the other students "Nadders are quick and light on their feet. Your job is to be quicker and lighter."

Fishlegs was quietly hiding by a barrel, but was noticed by the blue beast, who shot at him violently with its spiked tail.

As Fishlegs ran past, he cried out "I'm really beginning to question your teaching methods."

The other teens ran in groups, until the twins got caught in a corner by the dragon

Gobber saw their plight and gave them instructions.

"Look for its blind spot. Every Dragon has one. Find it, hide in it, and strike."

The twins held still right in front of the dragon, moving only to stay in the blind spot they stumbled on.

Being the twins, they naturally started arguing with in a few seconds. They got so loud that even I could hear them arguing over the spot. The dragon perked up, and turned its head to look at them.

Gobber watched, not really reacting to them running for the other side of the room with the dragon on their tails

"Blind spot, yes. Deaf spot? Not so much."

The dragon chased the two all the way to the other side of the room, giving me the chance to ask some more questions

"Hey, so how would one sneak up on a Night Fury?" I called up to Gobber who sighed

"None one's ever met one and lived to tell the tale. Now get in there!" He gestured at me, trying to direct me back to the group.

I backed up, still talking to him as I came to the start of another hall.

"I know, I know, but hypothetically-"

I heard Astrid hiss "Hiccup! Get down!"

I turned around to see the others clutching their weapons to their chests as they crouched to avoid detection by the iridescent dragon. When it turned around to glare at Gobber, as if it knew who was to blame for her imprisonment, we made our move to escape the dragon.

Whoa, why do you think its a her? I thought, as I attempted to roll after the others. The shield I was holding made a loud crack as I went, attracting the attention of the she-beast, who followed me in to the other passage.

Astrid raised her axe over her head, readying to through it at the Nadder. Snotlout naturally took the opportunity to bolster his falling manliness thanks to the other days defeat.

"Watch out babe. I'll take care of this." he said, and shot all six of his rounds at his opponent.

Even with the excessive firing, he still did not hit once. The Nadder raised her head, tilting it confusion and squawking. She turned in my direction and lifted her wings slightly, before turning on Astrid and Snotlout.

Snotlout continued to defend his shooting, citing the sun and lack of time.

The others ran, and seeing the dragons attention was completely on the other teens and destroying the maze, I took the time to ask more questions.

"They probably take the daytime off. You know, like a cat. Has anyone ever seen one napping?"

A shadow went over me, and I saw that the distraction of the maze had reached me. Astrid came over the wall, and landed right on top of me.

The wall slowly dropped down, and I grabbed Astrid's arm and rolled us away from the damage.

Gobber shouted my name in terror, while Astrid's yelp suggested she was just surprised by my sudden action.

After the sudden movement, she landed on top of me. Her legs straddled my body, and if we did not have a great fire-breathing beauty after us it would have been a dream come true.

We attempted to detangle, as the more immature students commented.

"Oooh! Love on the battlefield!" Toughnut called, then paused to listen to his sister.

"She could do better." was her grumbled response.

The dragon had been starring at us, unmoving in her confusion. She likely was trying to decide who to attack. When Astrid untangled enough to look up at her, the Nadder hissed her challenge.

Astrid's battle axe was wedged in my shield and her practice pistol, filled with shots that would hurt but not kill, was under the maze walls.

As she assessed the situation, I was loosening the straps on my shield, knowing exactly what weapon she would go for.

My actions proved correct, as she grabbed onto the handle of the axe and pulled the whole weapon and shield combo off my arm.

Once she had the weapon, she hurled it at the dragons face, and it connected with a loud crack.

"Well done, Astrid." Shouted Gobber, as the Nadder shook her head and wobbled away to the relative safety of her cage.

Astrid stood silently, watching the dragon until she was sure that it would not attack her. She then rounded on me.

"Is this some kind of a joke to you?!" She screamed, her calm face now filled with frustration "Our parents' war is about to become ours. Figure out which side you're on."

And with that, she walked off.

I stood, with an expression of surprise on my face. I let off a huff of air, and followed the other students out of the arena.

* * *

><p>- a -<p>

Updated for clarity.

Edited 1/23/2015

8. Chapter 8

The dragon was nowhere in sight. I stood just behind the final rocks that led to his cove. My riot shield, painted with childish stick figures, was held in front of me. I did not know how it would protect me from the fire, but it was better to be safe than dead.

I took a ziploc bag out of my satchel, and removed its contents. Then tossed the silver-green fish out into the cove.

Waited.

And waited.

Getting tired of waiting, I moved forward, the shield still in place. But for a certified genius, I could still make some big mistakes.

The shield didn't make it through the gap. Its sides wedged in the space, and would not come out.

"Idiot..." I muttered at myself

But my curiosity got the better of me, and continued out into the open.

Creeping into the cove was the most stressful thing I had ever done. But as I went, I started to realize that the dragon may have already left the cove.

Until I heard the small snarl off to my right.

The Dragon had been sitting on a boulder above my hiding place. He had been too big to fit through the gap, so he sat and waited till I stepped out.

As I backed away, he came down off the rocks and blocked my exit. Slitted eyes stared at me, as he kept his head down, a quiet growl in his throat warning me away from sudden movements.

He stopped suddenly, sniffing the air.

The Fish! I thought, searching for it on the ground, till my foot nudged its tail. But as I knelt over to grab it and toss it to the dragon, my jacket opened slightly, revealing my scaling knife.

He snarled, nose wrinkling, eyes shrinking to thin slits.

I stopped moving, and glanced between the knife and the dragon. Insanity won out and I gingerly took the knife out of my belt.

He hissed violently, then bobbed his head in the direction of the spring.

It took a few nods to realize what he was telling me. I dropped it to the ground, and kicked it into the water.

His demeanor changed in an instant. From tightly coiled piston spring to a slinky in a second. He looked expectantly to the fish in my hand, tongue darting out to lick his chops. I held out the fish, and he snuck closer to take it.

As he parted his jaws, I was surprised by a detail that I hadn't noticed.

"Toothless? But I could have sworn that you had-"

Teeth sprung forth from his jaws, and before my girlish shriek could bubble up, he snatched the fish and swallowed it.

"Teeth..." I finished lamely.

He blinked and licked his teeth, then turned to me. Creeping closer, sniffing at me. I backed up till I hit a rock.

"No, no, I don't have-" I squeaked, holding my breath "I don't have any more."

The dragon continued to sniff, focusing on my arm for a second before moving to sniff at my pockets.

Then he threw up on me. Half of the fish that I had given him slipped out onto my lap.

Ew. That was really the only thing that I could think.

The dragon dropped onto his haunches, and stared at me.

He seemed to be expecting something. I just scooted my feet a little closer to the rest of me.

He then glanced down at the fish, and back up at me.

I realized what he wanted me to do.

Knowing that I would never leave if I did not do what he gestured, I steeled my nerves, and bit into the fish.

It was about as bad as one would imagine it would taste. Raw fish and dragon fluids filled my mouth with a putrid taste.

I stuffed the fish into my cheek, intending to spit it out as soon as I could.

But the dragon had other ideas, letting me know by pretending to swallow.

My first attempt to swallow set a gag reflex off. Second time everything went down with an unpleasant slither.

But it made the dragon happy. The remaining tension that had built up relaxed. I smiled at him.

Slowly, his lips parted, and he bared his gummy jaws in a mime of my own lopsided smile.

Noticing the fading anger in his eyes, I took a chance by reaching out a hand, just to touch his scaly hide. I don't really know what I was expecting.

His head reared back, accompanied by a sharp snarl. Just like a creature of the night, he swooshed off to his perch.

I wonder why he hasn't left...He must be more hurt than he looks-

The dragon started to blow flames at the ground, startling me out of my thoughts and sending me scuttling to a rock. He was only heating up an area to nap on, but still, health first.

I snuck over to sit on a fallen log near him. The birds in the tree above sang out happily, uncaring of the fire breathing beast below. The moment I sat down, his eyes finished tracking the birds to land on me. I waved.

He was not amused, and huffed out hot air. He set his tail on his face.

Thinking that he was napping, I dragged myself closer, reaching out to touch his tail. But his fin snapped down.

I jumped up and started walking with purpose in no particular direction. He went farther away from me.

* * *

><p>- a -<p>

"Hiccup! blast you, yer not even keeping up with yer chores!" Gobber bellowed across the cluttered shop.

Springs and bolts littered the tabletops. Plexiglass chunks too small for use left lumpy shapes under misshapen latex gloves.

"Gobber, just give me a sec. I need to finish this rendering!" I called from my old laptop.

"Just ge a new laptop, then I won't have to wait"

He kicked at a dull bowie knife on the ground, and marched off to work on a few of the heat warped guns. I knew he was angry because of how thick his accent was getting.

I turned back to the screen, watching the pictures that I had taken before I left the cove flow into the computers memory.

The notebook I carried held detailed descriptions, ideas, and pictures of the dragon. But the images the downloaded into my laptop would help me figure out what was wrong with him.

"Hiccup! Damn'it get en here!"

That was the cue to run. Or pray.

"Yes?" I said, looking for the project that must have set something on fire.

"Ya left the sign off!" He said, glaring at me like I had killed his motorcycle Phil.

"That's it?! No fire or anything?" I snarked, irritated about being pulled away in a panic.

He rounded on me with a glint in his eye.

"Oh, so the store half o' my place dos ne mater to ya, is tha' it?" His bushy mustache growled at me.

"No, No Gobber! I just thought that it was a real emergin..." I trailed off, realizing that I had just started burying myself in the hole that I had dug.

He crossed his good arm over his prosthetic, which I noticed was the spot welder. Which was naturally hooked up to its gas tank on his back.

"If ye don think getting paid is ae Real emergency, then maybe I should cut your hours back." He continued to glare, but it softened at my horrified look.

"Look, Hiccup... I know that yer little side projects mean alot to ye, but 'till ye get some more real work experience, most ae those projects will end up just like that self propelling dragon tangeln o'

yers."

Bringing up a mistake I made a while back that had destroyed a large part of our food courts was a low blow. It had been the twins who aimed the thing at the fry oil containers. Not my fault, really.

"Gobber, that wasn't my-" I tried to say.

"Ye left it loaded with explosive rounds!" He rubbed at his head, then set his hand on my shoulder. "Look, I saw in the arena tha' ye need a little work with yer sword work. I din'e know what yer father was thinking, giving ye an axe. Swords are bet'er for wee lads like ye."

With those words, he handed me a sword. One thing anyone needed to know about Berk swords is that they are not anything like King Arthur's Excalibur. The sword he placed in my hand was super light, its steel blade covered in lines and laser etching for enhanced precision.

"Gobber, what are you getting at?" was my response. He had that same look he had in the arena, or when he had me dragging around rifles all day to _increase my strength._ I had come to fear that look.

* * *

><p>- a -<p>

The walk back home was less than fun. All the bones in my body sent light pings of pain to my brain, ones that would surely change to fire in the morning.

The lights in the little Chinese restaurant on the way home where all on, the only place in the whole town that remained open through the night. Most called them deranged, as they made themselves targets for oncoming dragons. Oddly enough, they never were attacked. The dragons usually went after the cannons, food supplies banks, and cars.

But for once, the little one sign was switched off. A blond waitress sat with her headphones in, and her head down to a book, bangs covering her face.

I lightly pushed the door, finding it unlocked. The day had been long, and I was hungry.

"Welcome to Mar's Meadows. You can have a table, but we aren't cooking until the boss gets back with some batteries for the smoke detectors." said the waitress, not looking up from the textbook.

The moment she said anything, my mind was occupied with growing horror. The one person who I couldn't seem to please worked at the only place to get food after my weapons practice.

Thinking if I just quietly leave, she would never know, and I could just have a sandwich at home... Again.

Before I made it to the door, she glanced up.

Astrid's blue eyes snapped to my face, and she began looking just as

flighty as I was. She cleared her throat.

"Hiccup, what are you doing here?" Her usual steadfast grumpiness was replaced with worry.

"Look, I can just leave-" I said.

But as I reached back to the door handle, it flung itself open to reveal two men.

"Bucket! Ya may be a Half-wit, but ya sure know how to haggle!" one said to the other.

"I don't know how to make haggis. Did a forget again?" Bucket said to his shorter companion. His head was shoved into a metal bucket, one that usually would hold paint, or screws at the shop.

"Oh, hello master Hiccup!" said the shorter one, lifting his hood to reveal Mulch, one of the many fishermen of Berk, and the owner of the Meadows.

"Astrid, we got the batteries! Just seat Hiccup, we will get him his food quick enough." He said, his very mild accent following him to the back.

Astrid stood up, grabbed a menu, and took me back to a table.

"Just sit here OK."

The look she gave me killed all the protests that had started to build in my throat.

She walked back to the kitchen. Her swinging gait, that inevitably caught my eyes halted, and she turned to look at me. Her hand clenched at her side, as though grabbing at her axe. But it wasn't there.

She disappeared into the kitchen.

- a -

****Warning, extra long Authors note. You don't have to read it if you don't want to.****

****So, took me long enough. Honestly, I was scared to post this. I was told by some one who I trusted that my writing sucked. That did not help me feel good about my stories. So, even after I finished this chapter, I did not post it. But after some prompting from a few of you, I had the courage to post this. I still don't know if it is any good, but it's something.****

****A few of you have had questions about the story. Some have PM'ed me, some posted in the reviews, and some just came from my beta readers.****

****Q1: So, its Dragon!Hiccup, right?****

**** A1: No. I like Dragon!Hiccup, sometimes, but this story is not that. Early in the story, I mentioned that it isn't a crossover, but I am taking comic book elements and mixing them in. That's as much as**

I will say for now.**

Q2: You know the twins names are spelled wrong, Right?

** A2: Yes, I know. My auto correct is possessed by a evil demon from the shadow realms. Exorcism doesn't work. It insists on making their names spelled like Roughnut ant Toughnut. At least it doesn't turn them to Doughnut's any more. I know its easy to change, but I have to do it individually for each time. #spoilers# Right not, it's not to much of a problem. But later they will get larger parts later in the story, and it will just get annoying. #endspoilers#**

Q3: Can I count on you to update more, and faster?

** A3: Yes and no. I will not make any guarantees, but I am trying for a update schedule. My goal is once every three weeks. But I have a very hectic life, and quite often, something bad happens when I am close to updating that sets me back.**

Q4: When will it be Hiccstrid? They seem really antagonistic right now.

** A4: There romance is going to be a slow build story. I never really liked the idea of a love at first sight sort of love for them. And if you remember, she kind of really disliked him in the beginning. So, its all getting reworked a bit. But this is definitely Hiccstrid.**

Q5: Its only Hiccups point of view?

** A5: Actually, I was thinking that at some point, Astrid's point of view would come in. What do you all think?**

**OK, I am done **

Edited 1/23/15

9. Chapter 9

Astrid's point of view!

Warning, very small OC! Probably will not show up again!

He had to come now... He couldn't have come an hour earlier? Stacy loves dealing with him!

I was pissed, sure. I took the late night shift to avoid all my classmates. No one came in after it got really dark, aside from some old regulars who declared that age would kill them before a dragon.

But as pissed as I was, worry was more pressing on my mind.

The twins were not rich, but their parents both graduated from our advanced program in its first run, so they had a free ride as long as they could prove that themselves at the end of each semester. This made them hyper competitive, over excitable, adrenaline junkies.

Fishlegs was very poor. His mother lost her husband to a storm. Her and Fishlegs were left without a money maker in the house. She worked three shifts at the laundromat, and barely made ends meet. All that said, Fishlegs was a genius. He had the brain of Einstein, in the body of an overweight teen. So he had a full ride as well.

Snotlout was well-off, because his father was the oil baron of Berk. He did not need to worry about qualifying for anything, and because his father wanted him to be one of the greats he was enrolled.

But Hiccup was rich. Like, heir-to-the-whole-town rich. He could have anything he wanted, and was brilliantly talented in academics on top of that. He was well rounded in his knowledge, seeking out experiences in the world rather than blindly trusting what he read out of books. If he didn't get killed before he took over, he would be worth even more as an adult.

All of them had something special to get them ahead in the world. Family ties, advanced intellect, or money.

I didn't.

"Astrid, ah just made a fresh pot o' tea." Mulch shoved the handle of the battered tea pot in my hand.

His prosthetic kicked against the tarnished metal, a plastic hand that was designed to hook onto the fishing nets he ran in his other job. His wife, Marina, or Mar for short, took the day shift.

"Well, stop daydreaming. Ye can sit with Hiccup if ye like. Most of our regulars wont be in today, with the expedition an all."

Bucket gave me a big smile as I left the kitchen. He thought it was funny to try to set me up with boys he approved of. His decision making skills weren't the best since the accident.

I pushed steel into my spine, and turned to the door.

* * *

><p>-a-<p>

Hiccup jumped when I dropped into the seat across from him.

He had taken out a sketchbook, and was sketching out plans for what looked like a catapult. The jump had put a nice dark mark right across the arm of the machine.

"Astrid! What are you-"

Cutting him off, I answered "Mulch said I could sit here. Its a slow night"

He nodded, glancing down and back to me repeatedly. I poured tea for both of us, and dropped a packet of sugar in mine.

"Look, tell me what I can do to keep your trap shut." I said bluntly, hoping that I could reason out a price for his silence.

"Huh?" He said. His brows had dropped to his eyes, and he frowned as

though he was insulted.

"Everyone want's something, and I am willing to barter for most things." I continued, heedless of his confusion.

"Astrid, really, I just want... Hang on, why do you think I am here?" he sputtered, face and ears turning pink.

"Oh, you probably just came in here for dinner. But considering how much you get ragged on, using me as a distraction for the others to get a break is just the type of plan a smart guy like you would think-"I said, only to be cut off by Hiccup.

"Stop! Just stop there. Look, all I want is my usual." he declared, strength entering his voice "I had late weapons practice, and I wanted to eat something other than a PB&J sandwich for the sixth time in three days."

He had shocked me into silence. I'm sure I looked surprised.

To his credit, he looked embarrassed and slightly horrified at his own outburst.

"I am sorry that I bothered you. I'll just get out of your way." He stood up, and started towards the door.

Realizing that I had just lost Mulch a much needed customer, I grabbed his arm to stop him.

"Wait!"

He turned to look at his arm, grimacing at my offending hand. I pulled it back, knowing that I had little time to correct my mistake.

"Hiccup, I'm sorry that I jumped on you. Just sit here, have some tea, and I'll get you your order to go." I grabbed my cup, and walked as fast as I could to the kitchen.

In the reflection of the glass, I saw him look at the door, then the table. He flopped into the booth, rubbing at the arm I grabbed.

"So, what would master Hiccup like?"

I backed into the door, startled by the sudden appearance of Bucket and Mulch. They looked at me with sly smiles.

"Oh bite me!" I snapped, stomping to the order clips and whipping out the notebook for orders.

He said his usual... I thought, debating what to do to ensure no hard feelings. In a snap decision, I wrote "Hiccups Usual" with the addition of some Jin deui, deciding that I would pay for them myself.

* * *

><p>-a-<p>

The fifteen minute wait for Bucket to finish cooking Hiccups food was

agonizing. He would have been faster, but he had to heat up everything all over thanks to the batteries cutting out in half the smoke detectors.

I stayed by the door to keep an eye on Hiccup, refilling his tea every time I thought he was about to leave. We didn't talk, as he sat working on the catapult designs. It was a small weapon, as far as I could tell, made for tossing things short distances.

I couldn't see the point in such a little weapon, but I figured it could be used for fetch.

Once his food was done, I carefully bagged it, sealing it tightly so it didn't attract Terrible Terrors. The sweets were put at the bottom, ensuring he wouldn't find them until later. I rung up the cost for the pastry, paying out of pocket, then brought out his receipt for the food.

Hiccup had started playing with the spoons at the table, building a rudimentary catapult from things around him. He had gotten it to work, but as I set the food down it shot a packet of sugar half way across the restaurant.

After following the sugars flight, I turned to Hiccup and saw his open stare.

"Mild calibration issue, right?" I asked him.

He nodded rapidly, reaching for his wallet. He looked at the receipt, took out some cash and gave me the booklet back.

He caught up to me as I was walking over to the cash register.

"Astrid, I still don't know what you want me to keep quiet about..."

I realized he had no idea what was wrong. He probably thought that it was something else entirely.

"I just don't want Steve to know where I work" I half lied, "He already has stalker-like tendencies. No need to give him another place to corner me."

Hiccup looked confused at Snotlout's real name, the light of understanding brightening his face when he realized exactly who I was talking about.

"You should have just said that you didn't want Snotlout to show up in you quiet time!" he laughed, as though he understood why I was keeping my job secret.

"Well, I will leave you to your peace and quiet."

He looked far happier than before, like I had said something to him that raised his hopes. The door creaked open and swung shut.

-a-

"Astrid! Clean up around the table, then Mar will drop ye off at home on her way t' the grocery store." Mulch yelled from the kitchen, his furry face poking out from the doorway.

"Sure thing!" I called, grabbing a rag from the sani-bucket.

Most of the restaurant was spotless, since it had been such a slow night. But Hiccup's table had to be dealt with.

The catapult sat proud in the center of the table, the sugar packets still next to it.

Hiccup's notebook was being used to give it a stable base, clearly forgotten in the rush to get home.

I carefully lifted the contraption up, taking it over to my station. The table was given a wipe down, silverware replaced with fresh sets.

"Whats this?"

I turned around, and saw Mar standing by the Hostess station, poking at the miniature catapult.

"Hiccup built it when he was waiting for his take out." I drawled, finishing off the table.

"ia, it took Bucket that long to cook the food?" Mar grumbled, a tick starting up in her eyebrow.

Not wanting to see Mar rip the gentle giant a new one, I jumped to his defense.

"Wasn't his fault. A bunch of the batteries that we put in the fire detectors last week where bad. They headed out to Silent Sven to replace them."

When she started muttering about what she would do to Sven, I decided that we were in the clear.

Sven could deal with Mar just fine.

_a-

I'm back! With in a reasonable amount of time too!

First time writing as Astrid, and she really presented a problem. I think more like Hiccup than rough and tumble Astrid. **If you guys thing that she is really bad, just read it like its her time of the month**

Tell me what I need to add, any help is good. The next chapter will take place at the same time as this chapter, only from Hiccups point of view.

Edited 1/23/2015

I thought about running the moment she went in the kitchen. It wasn't the most vikingly thing to do, but I bet my ancestors knew that an angry woman was not something to mess with.

But hunger won out, and I sat down in the booth.

_I'll just get a to-go order _I thought to myself, dragging out my sketchbook from my bag.

The nubby edged journal was filled with weapons sketches, unfinished equations, and rude doodles of the various diplomats that visited from the other towns. Since we were so remote, rivalries and fights between towns could escalate into disaster, so I got the joy of entertaining the more manly kids of the leaders.

So not looking forward to Dagur's next visit.

I wonder if I could teach him to fetch...

I started in on another outline for a weapon, a toned down version of my first catapult.

I need to name him... But what? Not like I can name him Fluffy.

I don't know how long I sat in the booth, but I already had the specks for a miniature catapult designed for fetch when Astrid dropped into the bench across the table. The surprise made me put a dark line of pen across my calculations.

"Astrid! What are you-"

Cutting me off, she answered "Boss man said I could sit here. Its a slow night"

I glanced at her every once and a while, waiting for her to say something. She poured tea from a beat up pot into the delicate cups, her bright red dress clashing with everything about her. I spent so much time glancing at her, I nearly missed her next words.

"Look, I don't know what you're doing here, but tell me what I can do to keep your trap shut."

Trap shut about what? I wondered.

"Doing here? Look, I just wanted to get something to eat!" I was confused, frowning at her out-of-the-blue comment.

"Everyone want's something, and I am willing to barter for most things." She ignored what I said, not realizing that I just wanted food. The strain that practice had put on my arms and back was starting to take its toll.

"Astrid, really, I just want... Hang on, why do you think I am here?" I asked, as the pain in my fresh scar started to throb.

"Oh, you probably just came in here for dinner. But considering how much you get ragged on, using me as a distraction for the others to get a break is just the type of plan a smart guy like you would think-"

I cut her off, losing control when she clearly wasn't thinking straight.

"Stop! Just stop there. Look, all I want is the pork fried rice, and an order of pot stickers to go. I had late weapons practice, and I wanted to eat something other than a PB&J sandwich for the sixth time in three days."

She sat and stared at me, mouth open slightly for a response that never came.

I just yelled at Astrid Hofferson, and now I'm going to die

I started to grow worried, my brain working at a frantic pace, looking for escape.

"I'm sorry that I bothered you. I'll just get out of your way."

I got up and turned to the door.

Her hand whipped out and grabbed my left arm. The one that the dragon had bit.

Oh gods, what did I do to you! I thought, barely containing the urge to start growling down to a muffled grimace.

She dropped her hand, asked me to wait, and fled to the kitchen.

Did I just think about tearing her hand off for attacking... No, she just doesn't want to lose a customer for her boss.

I rubbed at my arm, trying to settle my over active instincts. Being near her felt just like I did when I held the sword during practice, or the axe that my dad handed me the other night.

Like I was surrounded by danger.

* * *

><p>I thought about leavening quite often, while I waited for my food. But like she was reading my mind, Astrid kept coming out with her pot of tea and refilling my cup. Each time she came out, the sense of danger came back, but gradually fading until I was less jumpy.<p>

While I waited, I settled my nerves by building a model of my catapult. It was hard to read my calculations through the dark mark I made, and the fact my writing had grown worse as I continued. It was like my right hand had grown less coordinated by the minute, thanks to the beating it took when my shield was torn off.

Maybe I could name him Nightshot.

When Astrid set down my food, the catapult shot the sugar I was using as a representation for the fish I planned to toss to the dragon across the room.

Astrid turned to watch it fly, then met my eyes.

"Mild Calibration issue, right?" she asked dryly.

I nodded empathetically, not wanting to tell her it was her fault I would have to recalculate everything from scratch.

I took the receipt from her, and paid for my food. She walked off to the register.

I then noticed that she never told me what caused her to freak out earlier. I grabbed my bag and ran to catch up with her.

"Astrid, I still don't know what you want me to keep quiet about..."

She glanced over to me, looking startled about my comment

"I just don't want Steve to know where I work" I half lied, "He already has stalker like tendencies. No need to give him another place to corner me."

Steve, who's... Oh Snotlout! She doesn't want to see him any more than she has to.

She just admitted to me that she didn't want to be around the most popular, if idiotic, teen around.

"Well, I will leave you to your peace and quiet." I said with a smile, my spirit lifted now that the fight or flight mess that was my mind had finally quieted.

I put my box of food in my bag, and walked out the door into the night.

* * *

><p>The walk back to my house was uneventful, with the stars above me twinkling through the cloud layer.<p>

Another quiet night by my standards.

My house welcomed me with the scent of a cheerful wood fire in the fireplace, an undertone of mead and ale permeating the wooden floors.

For the first time in forever, I glanced at the old photos on the wall. My mother smiled out of them, a faded memory of a toy dragon billowing in my mind as I took a photo down. It was taken a few days after my second birthday, the last picture of us as a family. Dad was out of his usual uniform, and she was dealing with a squirmy two year old who wanted to go looking for trolls.

I went into the dining room, set the photo on the table as I started pulling out my food.

At the bottom of the bag, a package with a folded up post-it note rolled around. I pulled it out, and saw that it was full of sesame pastries.

If you tuck your legs in tighter, your shield will make less noise in when you roll.

~Astrid

"Must be her way of apologizing" I said quietly, popping a dumpling in my mouth.

I remembered the little toy dragon that my mother gave me, and what she said when I tried to run from it.

"_Its toothless dear. You may be afraid of it, but it's probably more scared of you."_

Toothless... Huh.

Reaching for my backpack, I went for my sketchbook to write down the word.

Only to realise that I used it as an anchor for my fetch machine.

* * *

><p>The cove was warm, despite the earlier rain. It was before the crack of dawn that I found the dragon hanging upside-down from the large tree. Not wanting to disturb it, I sat down on a log, and picked up a stick.<p>

_Pointy ear flaps, sturdy neck, triangle like face and head, lowset eyes. _I thought, roughly sketching the mechanics of the dragon. _You are really built for speed, the neck has to be all muscle._

A huffing noise behind me alerted me to a new presence. I glanced out of the corner of my eye, and saw the dragon leaning over and watching the stick move around in the dirt.

I continued to draw, adding detail to his eyes and face. He burbled a little, then waddled off. I thought that I had been upgraded from "Annoying thing that feeds me" to "Mildly interesting thing that feeds me", when a loud crash echoed through the cove. I jumped and whipped around to look at the dragon, who had just toar down a young cedar.

He began to drag it across the ground, looking at me every once and a while, carving loops and lines in the damp ground.

_He learns. Displays clear, defined emotions. Maybe even creative reasoning. He uses __**tools**__._

The dragon made one last edit, then dropped the tree to admire his handy work.

A squiggly line carved into soft dirt, wrapped around me and my drawing.

I got up to get a better look, and stepped on one of his lines. He snarled at me, not letting up till I got off the line. I tested his reaction a few more times, then began the difficult process of avoiding all the lines, focused only on the ground so not to tread on a line and be disemboweled.

Without intending to, I ended up right by the dragon. I stepped back

out of his private space, and he stared at me with wide, dilated eyes.

I saw myself in his eyes, not as a scared, timid boy, but as a unknown.

On its own accord, my hand began to reach out to his nose. he leaned away with a warning grimace.

I backed off, but steeling myself, I looked away and placed my hand out into the air near his nose.

I thought that I was a goner. When I felt his nose on my hand, warm and dry like a snake sunning on a rock, I expected to be a pile of ash on the ground. But he purred, and I looked up at him in wonder.

The moment was broken soon, and he swooped off to his perch to sleep some more.

But not before I named him.

* * *

><p>NOT ABANDONED!

This is not an update, but an explanation. My life has been on a bit of a rollercoaster. My family began to empty out our house in preparation for our move in the beginning of the year. This is a house that I have lived in for 18 years. I had to pack away all my things, give up a lot of my stuff, and generally deal with losing the only constant thing in my life. I spent these last few months feeling upset, angry, and sad. this was reflected in my writing (The twins died, like, 4 times) On top of that, my health took a nose dive. I can honestly say that I don't remember the last time that I felt 100%

But the main hold up was the fact that I ****was**** a High school Senior who was awful with homework. I spent the last semester as a student keeping my grades up.

I graduated, and will be going to college in the fall. Since it is now summer, You can expect a few more chapters coming in.

In the mean time, I will answer some questions that I have gotten.

Q1: That bite from, like, six chapters ago seems way too important to just be left unexplained to the world at large, when will you explain the significance of it?

A1: Soon. Very soon.

Q2: What does Dragon!Hiccup mean, anyway?

A2: When Hiccup is a dragon, turns into a dragon, or is born from dragons and becomes a boy.

Q3: Well what happens next?

A3: Don't loose faith, and you will find out :)

Q4: I still fail to see why Astrid harped on Hiccup. It's not like she had a dirty secret or anything. Of course the paragraph said that Astrid half-lied. So what's the truth?

A4: Astrid, on paper, is fairly average. She isn't dumb, isn't a genius, isn't poor, isn't rich, went to public school, just barley squeaked by on her SAT. Like it or not, while every one else (re. Teenage Boys) sees her as a goddess, she sees herself as not quite meeting her peers standards. So she picked the one shift at the one restaurant that she thought she would never see any of her classmates, and they would never see her bussing tables. **It's all in her head**, but she is a teenage girl who only excels at physical labor, in a town of people who excel at physical labor.

Thats all for now, but keep asking those questions. I would love to answer them.

11. A hiatus

Hello every one. I have some bad news. I will be going on a hiatus for a while.

This break is for a multitude of reasons, but mainly because the back injury that I received late last year had complications that I was not expecting, going from misalignment to degenerative disk disease and osteoarthritis. This causes me a lot of pain. I am now in college, and spend quite a lot of time working on homework on my computer, so I can not spend extra time working on this.

So I have an idea. PM me if you, my readers, would like to adopt foster this story. I'll give you my transcript, what I have written so far, and you can alter and change the story into your own ideas. And when I am capable of writing this story again, I will likely rewrite this whole story anyway (It isn't very well written) you won't have to worry about me claiming that its my story, because you will make your own from the ashes of mine.

If your interested PM me, and tell me the Idea you have for the name. I'll post a chapter with your name and the name of the story, so all my readers can read yours too.

I love you all, and I know that this is a betrayal of trust.

Sorry,

Actresspdx

End
file.